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IN THE COURT OF APPEAL OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
SECOND APPELLATE DISTRICT
DIVISION THREE

In re A.H., a Person Coming
Under the Juvenile Court Law.

B292230

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICES,

Los Angeles County
Super. Ct. No.
18CCJP04016

Plaintiff and Respondent,

v.

BRENDA O.,

Defendant and Appellant.

APPEAL from orders of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, Frank J. Menetrez, Judge. Dismissed.

Melissa A. Chaitin, under appointment by the Court of Appeal, for Defendant and Appellant.

Office of the County Counsel, Mary C. Wickham, County Counsel, Kristine P. Miles, Assistant County Counsel, and Tracey F. Dodds, Deputy County Counsel, for Plaintiff and Respondent.

Brenda O. (mother) appeals from the juvenile court's jurisdictional findings and dispositional orders declaring her daughter A.H. a dependent of the court. She argues that there is insufficient evidence to support the court's jurisdictional finding because there is no substantial evidence that her home was unsanitary or that the condition of her home placed A.H. at physical risk. While her appeal was pending, however, the court terminated dependency jurisdiction in this matter. The Department of Children and Family Services (Department) contends mother's appeal is now moot. We agree, and dismiss the appeal.

On June 25, 2018, the Department filed a one-count dependency petition alleging jurisdiction over A.H. (age 9) under Welfare and Institutions Code section 300, subdivision (b)(1). The petition alleged that Brenda's home was filthy, unsanitary, and unsafe. The court sustained the allegation, declared A.H. to be a dependent of the court, and released A.H. to mother. On February 21, 2019, the court terminated dependency jurisdiction.

“ ‘A judicial tribunal ordinarily may consider and determine only an existing controversy, and not a moot question or abstract proposition. ...’ ” [Citation.] An important requirement for justiciability is the availability of ‘effective’ relief—that is, the prospect of a remedy that can have a practical, tangible impact on the parties’ conduct or legal status.” (*In re I.A.* (2011) 201 Cal.App.4th 1484, 1490.)

An order terminating juvenile court jurisdiction generally renders an appeal from a previous order in the dependency proceedings moot. (*In re C.C.* (2009) 172 Cal.App.4th 1481, 1488.) Dismissal is not automatic, however; if erroneous jurisdictional findings could have severe and unfair consequences in future

family law or dependency proceedings, we may exercise our discretion to resolve the appeal on its merits. (See *In re Daisy H.* (2011) 192 Cal.App.4th 713, 716; see generally *In re Kristin B.* (1986) 187 Cal.App.3d 596, 605 [question of mootness of appeal from order preceding termination of dependency jurisdiction “must be decided on a case-by-case basis”].)

Here, mother contends the evidence was insufficient to support the court’s assertion of jurisdiction over A.H. Even were we to agree, however, our decision could have no practical impact on the underlying dependency proceeding. Mother acknowledges as much: A.H. remained in her custody at all relevant times, and the court’s exercise of jurisdiction did not lead to any change in placement or custody status. The potential adverse consequences mother cites—including unspecified “administrative actions” and “stigma”—are speculative. Accordingly, we will dismiss the appeal.

DISPOSITION

The appeal is dismissed.

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LAVIN, J.

WE CONCUR:

EDMON, P. J.

EGERTON, J.